

COMMUNICATION GUIDELINES FOR SOCIAL MEDIA ADMINISTRATORS



Information plays a vital role in helping a community be #DisasterReady. If handled correctly it can help lead to positive outcomes, if handled poorly it can cause undue stress and negative outcomes. This means that if you are an administrator or moderator of a community feed, whether you like it or not, you have a large degree of responsibility before, during and after community disasters. This guide is designed to help Administrators and Moderators think about how they use their pages for hazard and disaster communication.

1

As an owner of a community page you can connect on a local level to enhance disaster preparedness and create a #DisasterReady community. Use your voice to promote messages about preparedness, especially at key times throughout the year when different incidents occur such as home fires, wildfires, winter storms, heavy traffic through the area, etc.

2

Consider each message before posting about disaster or crisis situations. You do not want to cause further distress. It is good to share information but think about the consequence. Important questions to ask:

- What response will the message evoke?
- What is the reason for posting this message?
- Is the information accurate and helpful?
- Use the correct hashtags to allow for easy tracking of information.

Continued overleaf



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3

When moderating users' posts, question the posts on the following basis and block and remove them where necessary. Also turn off comments (trolling) if the discussion is not helpful to others.

- Is the information accurate and helpful?
- Will the message cause more damage and distress than good?
- Is the message repetitive i.e. has this already been posted?
- Are messages causing unnecessary anxiety and panic?
- Is there a trend in information people are seeking? Perhaps pin a post to your feed with this information.

4

Set up rules for your community as this allows you to outline the expectations for how group members should interact and clarify the behaviour you expect.

5

Enlist Moderators to help you during a disaster. Tasks of moderators include:

- Keeping an eye on content to ensure nothing is violating the group's policies.
- Add (or remove) new members as needed; this includes approving member requests.
- Delete spam or other unwanted content from the group.
- Reviewing content that has been flagged for review by other users.
- Other tasks may include posting every so often to keep engagement up and replying to people.

6

During large disasters, community pages can become overwhelmed with messages. Consider changing your posting rules temporarily to allow you to cope..

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Photographs and accurate incident information can help give the community a sense of what is happening but keep an eye on privacy of community members affected by the disaster and limit the posts so as not to overwhelm the community and cause undue distress.

8

During a crisis, many new members join groups and become more active. Perhaps have a saved post which reminds people who you are as the group administrator and what the rules of the group are. You can then pin this post to your page if you feel the time is right.

9

If you want to use your social media channel to assist in response and recovery it is very important to find out what is really needed. Know the needs of the community or emergency responders before you launch into helping. Gather this information through emergency services contacts as well as local community contacts before fundraising or generating community support.

10

You should not hesitate to remove people from the group (and block them) if they are:

- Violating group policies.
- Spamming the group, including with self-promotion if that is discouraged.
- Being abusive towards or trolling other members.

11

Develop positive working relationships with local emergency services, security companies and community groups involved in incidents and disasters. Ask if you can receive periodic updates with accurate information that will be helpful to community members. Tip: *Perhaps set up a WhatsApp Group where essential alerts and updates can be shared, which you can then post on your pages.*



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